DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 349 113 PS 020 776

AUTHOR Costley, Joan B.
TITLE Career Development Systems in Early Care and Education: A Planning Approach.
INSTITUTION Wheelock Coll., Boston, MA. Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education.
SPONS AGENCY A.L. Mailman Family Foundation, Inc.; Carnegie Corp. of New York, N.Y.; Ford Foundation, New York, N.Y.; Kellogg Foundation, Battle Creek, Mich.; Rockefeller Bros. Fund, New York, N.Y.
PUB DATE Jan 91
NOTE 7p.; Paper was also funded by the Harris Foundation.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Career Development; Career Ladders; Certification; *Child Caregivers; *Early Childhood Education; Educational Quality; *Professional Development; *Program Implementation
IDENTIFIERS Career Progression Systems; *Caregiver Training; Policy Issues; State Regulation; *Training Needs

ABSTRACT

This paper examines four issues relevant to planning the use of funding resources for installing a career development system for practitioners in the early childhood education field. The first issue concerns the need for a career development system. Arguments for the importance of such a system are based on the need for a dynamic career ladder and allowance for continuing professional growth; a shortage of qualified practitioners; and the relationship between the amount of a practitioner's training and the quality of the practitioner's work. The second and third issues concern the characteristics and components of a progressive career development system. Training must provide knowledge and skills, be accessible to all practitioners, allow for practitioner accreditation, and be cumulative. Components of a career development system should include a system model, coordinated training, a personnel registry, and a training approval system. The fourth issue concerns the implementation of a career development system. Steps involved in implementation include: (1) developing a coordinating committee; (2) developing a profile of training needs; (3) understanding state licensing rules; (4) compiling information about training programs; (5) developing salary guidelines; (6) convening a statewide advisory group; (7) requesting state funds; (8) lobbying for a training approval process; and (9) establishing a training and planning fund. (BC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Career Development Systems in Early Care and Education:

A Planning Approach

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Joan B. Costley

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

THE CENTER
FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT
IN EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

PS 020776

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

THE CENTER
FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT
IN EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

Wheelock College
200 The Riverway
Boston, MA 02215-4176
617 734 5200

STAFF

GWEN MORGAN
Project Director

ANDREA GENSER
Administrative Director

JOAN COSTLEY
Associate Director

The Center is funded by

- *The Carnegie Corporation of New York,*
- *The Ford Foundation,*
- *The Harris Foundation,*
- *The W.K. Kellogg Foundation,*
- *The A.L. Mailman Family Foundation and*
- *The Rockefeller Brothers Fund.*

About The Center

The Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education addresses planning and policy issues about career development for all program types in the early childhood field. Established at Wheelock College in 1990, the Center enables the college to extend the application of its mission of improving the quality of life for children and families. The Center is the vehicle through which Wheelock, in partnership with other national organizations and government policy makers, stimulates and further develops the concept of a dynamic career development system as a model of professionalism.

The Center's current activities include:

- **Publishing a "State of the States" report** which profiles: state licensing standards relating to practitioner qualifications and development; teacher certification standards for the early childhood years; community-based training; contributions by two and four year colleges; funding mechanisms for training; and emerging initiatives.

- **Working with strategic sites** to support and document innovative career development projects at the state and community level.

- **Providing technical assistance** to state and metropolitan groups about career development systems in early care and education.

- **Offering advanced seminars in child care administration** at Wheelock and in cooperation with colleges, state governments and community organizations around the United States. The seminars develop local strengths and encourage local involvement in training leaders in early care and education.

- **Publishing and serving as a clearinghouse** for concept and planning papers; information and documents on the development of state policies; funding strategies, and programs developed at local, state, or national levels.

- **Networking with other national organizations** in the early care and education field to influence policy, and develop program and funding strategies in career development.

Career Development Systems in Early Care and Education:

A Planning Approach

By Joan B. Costley

Before we can plan the use of funding resources for installing a career development system for practitioners in the early childhood field, we must examine several questions and issues, which include:

- *Why is it critical to have a career development system?*
- *What are the key characteristics of a career development system?*
- *What are its necessary components at the state and local level?*
- *What are the steps needed to develop and implement such a system?*

WHY IS IT CRITICAL TO HAVE A CAREER DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM?

During the past several years, the question of the importance of a well-trained and well-compensated child care workforce, as well as the career development system that would support it, has been gaining increasing attention and concern. There are three arguments for the importance of a career development system in the early care and education field.

The first argument has been articulated by Gwen Morgan in several publications as the need for a "dynamic career ladder." Morgan asserts that, for our field to have vitality, we must include individuals from all groups from the population in the early care and education workforce, so that the children served have role models who are members of their own communities. She also argues for a model in which continual growth is respected. Carrying out the ladder concept depends upon the presence of a career development and training system which will provide educational access and career mobility to all early childhood practitioners who enter the field in positions ranging from teacher assistant to family child care provider to lead teacher and director, with educational backgrounds which vary from a high school diploma to a college degree.

The second argument is based on the realities of the labor force in early childhood programs. The typical early care and education practitioner is an adult who has entered the field with relatively little formal training in early childhood. Even if all of the graduates of early childhood teacher training programs from two-year and four-year colleges were recruited to work in center based or family child care programs (many become kindergarten teachers instead), we would still have only a fraction of the early childhood practitioners needed nationally. (Costley, NASBE Testimony 1988) This shortage of qualified practitioners attests to the need for a practitioner training system which responds to the circumstances and needs of those people already in the field and those most likely to enter it.

The third argument, recently documented in the reports of the National Child Care Staffing Study (1989), shows the direct relationship between the level of formal training of staff members and the quality of their work with children in terms of effects on children's language development, social skills, and learning.

WHAT ARE THE KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF A PROGRESSIVE CAREER DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM?

There are four major characteristics of a progressive career development system for early childhood practitioners:

1. Training must provide the knowledge and skills needed for the full range of roles and specializations which comprise the early childhood field. Training must be designed to respond to the specific needs of practitioners in

Joan Costley is the Associate Director of The Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, Boston, MA *© January 1991*

centers as well as family child care. It should be organized to prepare specialists in infant-toddler, pre-school, school-age care, and administrative roles.

2. Training must be available and accessible for practitioners at all levels – from entry level to master practitioners – and in all settings – from center-based to family child care programs. To fulfill these criteria, training experiences must be designed with consideration for the level of knowledge and skill of the participants, and must be presented in formats and locations which facilitate participation by child care practitioners. For example, this might mean providing training experiences at night, in the community, or in unusual formats such as intensive weekend sessions.

3. Training experiences should be designed so that practitioners can be accredited by the state licensing and certification authority, by the higher education system, or, preferably, by both. It is not enough that the training experience provide new learning. To provide genuine career mobility, the learning and skill gained from the experience must be acknowledged and documented through an authoritative body. Furthermore, accrediting bodies should coordinate their standards so that practitioners are not expected to repeat training experiences merely to satisfy differing requirements of different formal structures.

4. Training experiences should be designed and coordinated to be cumulative. Training experiences should be designed and identified by topic area, and level of knowledge and skill so that practitioners can participate in training appropriate to their needs as they work toward higher levels of skill and knowledge.

WHAT ARE THE COMPONENTS OF A PROGRESSIVE CAREER DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM?

We have found that a progressive career development system includes four components. Each state can develop its own framework and strategies for providing and coordinating these functions:

• A Career System Model

A state must develop a conceptual model for its career system which defines and relates its training goals and standards for the practitioner positions it wishes to identify and standardize. This model should also identify and describe all of the components of the career development system. (A more complete description of one example can be found in the report "Delaware First...Again"; Brown, Costley, and Morgan, 1990)

• A Coordinated Training System

There must be a planning system for training in which state officials and all constituencies play a major role. A training needs assessment and/or a demographic profile of the state's early childhood labor force serve as necessary starting points to identify the content areas, skill levels, and geographic areas in which training is needed. The state can then facilitate a process in which licensing authorities, community groups, funders, and higher education institutions can become aware of early childhood training needs and collaborate on the design and implementation of training programs.

• A Personnel Registry

A personnel registry, perhaps organized and operated by the state licensing authority, can become the centralized system to record all training completed by early childhood practitioners in the state. It could include training completed not only to meet state training requirements, but to further career development goals by tracking not only formal training experiences such as college courses, but also training experiences completed for CEUs or for skills development, the registry would create a career record for each person working in early childhood in center-based care and in family child care.

•A Training Approval System

A training approval system ensures that all training experiences meet quality standards. Training experiences can be recognized by the state to meet licensing requirements and by the higher education system to earn certificates or degrees. The system functions in three areas: 1) it reviews and recognizes workshops and conferences for ongoing training or for CEUs; 2) it categorizes college courses and programs in terms of their relationship to licensing requirements; and 3) it ensures that training experiences meet requirements for specific training levels

and topic areas.

Participation of both the public and private higher education institutions in the state is essential to the success of this system. One of the most important goals in a career development system is to generate awareness of the training needs of the existing early childhood labor force among these institutions and to help them to become more responsive to these needs. Community colleges and four-year colleges must be encouraged to become engaged in a planning and implementation process which will enable them to identify the gaps in their existing offerings, as well as the need for articulation among the various levels of programs they already offer. A progressive career development system provides a continuous linkage – workshops and CEU offerings to individual college courses, on through certificate programs, to associate degrees and bachelor degrees.

WHAT ARE THE STEPS TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A CAREER DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM?

Begin by assessing the status of your state's planning, licensing, and training resources. Then consider the following specific steps. You may want to focus your efforts on the point on the list that represents the current level of your state's activity and coordination.

➡ **Develop a coordinating committee or task force** in your state that includes state government officials, representatives of higher education institutions, and members of the early childhood community to discuss, review, and plan for the career development needs of early childhood practitioners.

➡ **Develop a demographic profile** of the training backgrounds and needs of early childhood practitioners in your state.

➡ **Know your state's licensing rules and policies.** Make pre-qualification and ongoing training requirements part of the state licensing requirements for a progression of roles in all settings.

➡ **Compile information about existing training offerings.** Do they include all of the following for current staff and providers: workshops; training series for CEUs; college courses; CDA training and credentialing; early childhood certificate programs carrying college credit; associate degree programs; bachelor degree programs?

➡ **Push for the development of a state training plan** to meet the full spectrum of training needs of early childhood practitioners.

➡ **Work with colleges and community groups** to plan training experiences that are financially and geographically accessible to providers and available in a variety of settings and formats. The alternatives might include training programs held not only on college campuses, but in community centers, and at resource and referral agencies, and at day care centers at night and on weekends, year-round.

➡ **Develop a higher education coordinating committee** to ensure that credits earned in early childhood training experiences are accepted by colleges in your state toward certificate and degree programs. Assure that all credits earned at each progressive level are fully accepted at the next level, e.g. credit earned for individual courses and certificate programs is applied fully toward degree programs.

➡ **Develop recommended salary guidelines** and model salary schedules.

➡ **Convene a representative statewide advisory group** to advocate for funds and programs for practitioner training and career development.

➡ **Petition for your state licensing agency to identify** and relate specific training experiences to training requirements. Have these standards published for all providers.

➡ **Request that your state set aside funds** to develop a personnel registry for early care and education providers which documents and records their training experiences and issues credentials certifying their qualifications.

➡ **Lobby for a training approval process** in your state which will ensure the quality and appropriateness of training experiences accepted toward licensing requirements.

➡ **Work to establish an ongoing training and planning fund** with a mix of federal, state, and private dollars.

The most important directions in state planning at this point reflect the necessity of involving all three of the major forces which will impact the future of career development: state government, higher education, and the early care and education community.

Wheelock
COLLEGE

200 The Riverway
Boston, MA 02215-4176
617 734 5200